

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Final Office Action dated December 22, 2005. Claims 1-6, 8 and 13-18 were pending in the application. In the Office Action, claims 1-6, 8 and 13-18 were rejected. In this Amendment, Claim 1 was amended.

Claims 1-6 and 8 and 13-18 thus remain for consideration.

Applicant submits that claims 1-6, 8 and 13-18 are in condition for allowance and requests withdrawal of the rejections in light of the following remarks.

Interview

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Lavinder for his time during a February 7, 2006 interview.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1-5 and 13-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Blaicher (US Patent Number 1,422,819).

Claims 1-6, 8 and 13-18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gittler (US Patent Number 2,128,644).

As discussed during the February 7th interview, Examiner agreed with Applicant that language drawn to (1) "the other sidewalls [first and second edge] of the inner and outer rings lying in the same plane would overcome the rejections based on Gittler" and (2) "the outer ring being solid would overcome the rejections based on Blaicher."

Applicant therefore has amended claim 1 to include the limitations "a first band portion having an inner surface, an outer surface and a first edge" and "a second band

portion having an inner surface, an outer surface and a second edge, the second band portion being completely solid, and the first edge residing on the same plane as the second edge;.” Accordingly, Applicant believes that independent claim 1 is patentable over Gittler and Blaicher—taken either alone or in combination.

Claims 2-6, 8 and new claims 13-18 depend on claim 1. Since claim 1 is believed to be patentable over Gittler and Blaicher, claims 2-6, 8 and 13-18 are believed to be patentable over Gittler and Blaicher on the basis of their dependency on claim 1.

CONCLUSION


Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions, he/she is invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account No. 06-0515.

Respectfully submitted,
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